



AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

December 2, 2019

Montgomery County Delegation

Re: MC 7-20, Agricultural Land Transfer Tax - Alterations

Good Evening Members of the Montgomery County Delegation,

On behalf of the Montgomery Agricultural Advisory Committee, we thank the Delegation members for this opportunity to present testimony in support with MC 7-20 with amendments.

Montgomery County is proud of our nationally recognized Agricultural Reserve including the 558 farmers that continue to earn a living farming the land. Montgomery County is currently ranked third in the nation for total acres of farmland protected by agricultural easements. This achievement demonstrates the commitment that our farmers have made to ensure that farmland is available for future food and fiber production for many generations to come.

There are many farmers in the County that are interested in farmland preservation, but unfortunately the sources of funding to purchase agricultural easements is very limited. The Agricultural Advisory Committee Thanks Delegates Luedtke and Reznik for sponsoring MC 7-20 that will redirect County Agricultural Transfer Taxes to fund agricultural easements and agricultural programs.

While the Agricultural Advisory Committee supports the primary purpose of Bill MC 7-20 to redirect the County Agricultural Transfer Taxes for farmland preservation, we understand the County Executive and County Council support the Bill with amendments that delete the language relating to offsets.

The Agricultural Advisory Committee agrees with Delegate Luedtke that these are friendly amendments and they will not negatively impact the Bill.

The Agricultural Advisory Committee thanks the sponsors of the Bill MC 7-20, Delegates Luedtke and Reznik for their continued support to assist the agricultural community in Montgomery County.

Sincerely,

Doug Lechliden, Chairman

